



SCOUT ABRAHAM LINCOLN

by

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Abraham Lincoln typifies all that is best in the Boy Scout movement and might well be called its American patron saint. The fact that his birthday occurs in the same week as the annual Boy Scout anniversary has contributed much to the yearly observance of Lincoln's Birthday recommended by the national Boy Scout executives. This number of Lincoln Lore is presented showing how Lincoln as a boy would have measured up to the twelve scout laws.

1. A Scout Is Trustworthy

Abraham Lincoln's honesty has become proverbial and the term "Honest Abe" is familiar to all American boys. Once while still a youth he borrowed a book of a neighbor; and, after reading late into the night, he placed the book on a shelf by the window. That night the rain beat in

through the window and ruined the book. Promptly the next day Lincoln went to the neighbor and told him of his misfortune, offering to do anything which would compensate the owner for the book. He "pulled fodder" for three days to make the loss right.

2. A Scout Is Loyal

Lincoln was a patriot from his very earliest days. As president-elect he said in a speech, "Away back in my childhood, the earliest days of my being able to read, I got hold of a small book . . . Weems' 'Life of Washington.' I remember all the accounts there given of the battle-fields and struggles for the liberties of the country . . . and you all know for you have all been boys, how these early impressions last longer than others. I recollect thinking then, boy even though I was, that there must have been something more than common that these men struggled for."

3. A Scout Is Helpful

Not many boys seven years of age can help to build a new home in which the family is to live. Lincoln said that when he was seven years of age he had an ax put in his hands, and he helped his father get out the wood for the new log cabin. He also learned to write very early in life; and, in a community where few of the people had mastered this accomplishment, he was called upon to do much of the letter writing for the neighbors. This gave him many opportunities to do "a good turn."

4. A Scout Is Friendly

During the latter part of Lincoln's youth in Indiana, he clerked in a store; and this fact in itself indicates he was of a friendly nature, as his duties called upon him to meet all classes of people. He was a constant reader of the pioneer newspaper and one of his stocks in trade for which he did not charge was keeping the customers informed about the news of the country.

5. A Scout Is Courteous

One of Abraham Lincoln's school teachers was named Andrew Crawford. He had one course of study that few pioneer children were privileged to follow. He called it a course in manners; we would call it etiquette. Practical demonstrations were given by having one of the pupils retire from the building and come back and knock on the door; then another pupil would answer the knock, usher in the guest, and introduce him or her to the other pupils in the room. Lincoln learned as a youth to be courteous.

6. A Scout Is Kind

Lincoln's kindness is known the world around. As a youth it was manifested in his kindness to animals. The story of how he severely rebuked his stepbrother and another boy for torturing a turtle by putting live coals upon its back is supplemented by acts of later years in which he put some young birds back in their nest, and also on one occasion helped to release a pig caught in a fence, much to the detriment of his own personal appearance.

7. A Scout Is Obedient

Lincoln was not only obedient to his parents, but he was obedient also to his stepmother, Sarah Bush Lincoln. She made this statement about her stepson who lived with her from the time he was ten years of age until he was a grown man, "I can say what scarcely one woman—a mother—can say, in a thousand, Abe never gave me a cross word or look, and never refused in fact or appearance, to do anything I requested him."

8. A Scout Is Cheerful

One usually thinks of Lincoln as having always been sad and melancholy, but as a boy, according to his associates, he was full of fun and very early in life became a humorist with an exceptional ability to tell amusing stories. His father before him was a story teller and Abraham would often begin an anecdote with "As my old father used to relate, etc."

9. A Scout Is Thrifty

Thrift was necessary for survival when Lincoln was growing up. When he was but sixteen years of age, he was hired to operate a ferry boat across Anderson River where it flowed into the Ohio. He had built himself a small boat and one day was approached by two men to assist them in boarding a passing steamer. Lincoln received two silver half-dollars for his trouble. He never forgot this incident which made possible his first savings.

10. A Scout Is Brave

While Lincoln was still a youth living in Indiana he was employed to assist another young man about his own age to take a flatboat load of produce down the river to New Orleans. One night, while the boat was tied to the river bank, they were attacked by seven negroes who attempted to kill and rob them. "They were hurt some in the melee but succeeded in driving the negroes from the boat," according to Lincoln's own account of the affair.

11. A Scout Is Clean

In the pioneer days when there was much drinking of hard liquor, especially by the young men, it is to Lincoln's credit that he chose to leave it alone. This early habit of temperance was followed throughout his entire life, and he used neither intoxicating liquors nor tobacco in any form.

12. A Scout Is Reverent

Although Abraham Lincoln was but nine years of age when his mother died, he wrote a note to the minister of the church back in Kentucky, with which his parents had been affiliated, asking the minister if he would come and preach a funeral sermon in memory of his mother

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